

FREDERICK COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MINUTES
Monday, June 12, 2017
Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor
12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD

COA MEMBERS	DOA STAFF	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED	GUESTS
Mary Beachley	Kitty Devilbiss	Randy McClement, Mayor		Amanda Crawford
Elizabeth Chung	Monica Grant	Tish Raff		Shirley Grier
Marcy Gouge	Sue Ramsburg	Marie Reeves		Pauletta Handy
M.C. Keegan-Ayer	Carolyn True	Leslie Schultz		Margaret Jackson
Tom Lawler		Sandra Wastler		Judy Kendro
Dianne Lewis				Cindy Kokoski
Ann McDermott				Annie Lewis
Bobbie Speace				Liz Selby
Thea Uhlig-Ruff				Dan Speace
				Lori Stup

- I. **Call to Order** – Dianne Lewis called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.
- II. **Welcome & Introductions** – Dianne welcomed all attendees. She gave a brief description of the Commission and its goals. Commission members around the table introduced themselves. Members of the audience were invited to introduce themselves. Dianne acknowledged retiring members; Mary Beachley, Thea Ruff, and Bobbie Speace. She thanked them for their time, efforts, and dedication to the seniors of Frederick County. She presented Mary

and Bobbie with a certificate of recognition from County Executive Jan Gardner. Thea was not able to attend today's meeting.

- III. **Action on the Agenda** – There are no additions to the agenda today.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the May 8th meeting were approved as written. Dianne made a motion to approve the minutes. Bobbie seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- V. **Seniors First Report, County Executive Jan Gardner** – County Executive Jan Gardner thanked the Commission for the invitation to today's meeting and for the work being done by the Commission for seniors in the community. The senior population is one of the four priorities CE Gardner selected to focus on when she was elected. The other three are education, jobs, and community needs. She appointed leadership teams for each topic. These teams worked for sixty days to determine priorities for a four year plan. The Senior team included individuals from community organizations, non-profits, community advocates, and staff from the Citizens Services Division Department of Social Services, and the Health Department/AERS. The 60 plus population is expected to grow faster in Frederick County than any other segment of the population in the coming years. The plan should address the needs of active seniors as well as the needs of more frail and/or indigent seniors. The categories to focus on which the steering committee identified are wellness, quality of life, adequate and affordable housing, healthcare, and access to transportation options. This committee was tasked with devising a plan to address these senior needs. The result is the Seniors First Report which includes over thirty recommendations. The Report and list of recommendations are located on the Frederick County Government website at www.frederickcountymd.gov/seniorsfirst.

One priority recommendation is to create a new division with a one stop shop for seniors. Some other key recommendations are: 1 - connect and engage seniors with lifelong learning, social activities, and employment, 2 – co-locate services with partner agencies, 3 – collect data on services and needs, 4 – reduce the wait list for Meals on Wheels, and 5 – analyze the existing senior center structure. Work on these recommendations began in the fall of 2016. There is a new partnership with Frederick County Parks and Recreation to broaden the variety and location of fitness programs offered to seniors in the community. Meals on Wheels has expanded with five new routes. There has been an 88% increase in the number of volunteers. There has been an increase in funding and the Dept. of Aging has purchased a food truck which enables the program to deliver food in areas which are rural/remote. Co-location of services

has a separate committee. Cost effectiveness and efficiency were guidelines when coordinating multiple agencies. Staffing models, funding streams, and regulations were considered. The County manages four senior centers; Frederick, Brunswick, Emmitsburg, and Urbana. Commission on Aging members are a part of a team which will review what is working and what is not working in the centers.

Funding in the fiscal 2018 budget was increased to add two additional home health aides and home health contract services. There is additional funding for the Meals on Wheels program. Both these additions will allow more seniors to remain in their home safely. Funding was also increased to allow for additional support staff for the Department. The new division will be funded starting January 2018 and there is a group working on a name for the division. The name should be welcoming while remaining easy to find and access. Some of these changes to the Department will affect county ordinances and there will likely be a by-law committee to address this issue. The Commission is welcome and essential to work in any and all groups to help the Department implement new initiatives.

CE Gardner spoke briefly about Montevue and Citizens Care and Rehab Center which was retained by the County via a legal process. The (profit) funds from CCRC will be used to support Montevue while accepting some indigent residents. Currently funding is available for thirty residents. The hope and goal is to be able to serve more seniors. The financial reports are positive and reviews are done to ensure quality of care. CE Gardner would like to come back annually to give an update.

Questions/Comments:

Elizabeth Chung expressed her thanks for the presentation and her cultural competency concerns in regard to the senior population which is also becoming very culturally diverse. There may be barriers to services because of language barriers. Her organization would be willing to partner and offer training opportunities. Sometimes the barrier is not just a language barrier, but a misunderstanding of the cultural differences. CE Gardner states that Montevue does offer some respite care and there are likely other opportunities in the community. She acknowledges that distribution of information can sometimes be problematic. Information is typically available in the newspaper, on the radio, and on the County website.

Mary Beachley expressed the need for affordable respite care for adult disabled or older adults caring for disabled children. Individuals with disabilities are physically healthier and a longer

lifespan. Respite at an assisted living can be cost prohibitive. The options available for respite for adult disabled individuals are limited. Lack of funding can be a barrier to services.

Marcy Gouge questioned if the two new aides in the budget is sufficient to meet the needs of the community. Carroll County has a model where active seniors are trained to be an in-home care aide and receive a stipend. Is there a plan to have that here in the future? CE Gardner stated that it would be helpful to have more data to demonstrate the need in order to provide funding for additional services. Public safety and public education have historically been a priority for County funding. There are always options for public comment at budget hearings so that citizens can give input. Elizabeth Chung added that the Asian American Center has been doing training for community health workers. She is looking for a second cohort at this time.

Ann McDermott spoke about the need for data and how the proposed surge of senior citizens will affect the growing needs. She spoke specifically about the need for affordable senior housing in the area. CE Gardner stated that a housing study was done in the last year and the housing needs are across most age groups.

Review of the 2017 General Assembly Session, Senator Ron Young and Delegate Karen Lewis-Young – Dianna gave some history and background on Senator Ron Young's and Delegate Karen Lewis-Young's history of public service. They attended to speak on legislative status as related to senior issues.

Delegate Lewis-Young spoke about many legislative items related to health. She distributed a list of bills that were passed during the recent legislative session. She stated that she sponsored legislation that assisted in the creation of the Monocacy Health Dental Clinic. This was a key accomplishment because lack of dental care can lead to other health issues. She expressed that the ACA funding is important because the costs of healthcare has grown and will continue to grow. Some of the specific bills she spoke about today were Maryland Healthy Working Families Act, Long-Term Ombudsman Program-Regulations, Senior Citizen Activities Centers, the Price Gouging Prohibition, and Reporting Abuse to Long-Term Care Ombudsman/Office of Healthcare Quality (see handout for details). She talked about the Renter's Tax Credit which has been revised and will increase the number of people who qualify for it.

This credit is substantially underutilized and could assist with the affordable housing issue.

Senator Ron Young distributed a list of bills which he sponsored/co-sponsored. He supported initiatives that would help with some of the funding that has been lost by state cuts. He spoke about specific areas related to senior services and the funding amount attached. He then spoke about specific bills/issues related to senior issues (see attached). He spoke about the bill that would phase out state income taxes for seniors over 65 to encourage residents to stay in Maryland. This has not passed and has been minimally supported. Senator Young spoke about the need for affordable senior housing. He believes the area around the Hargett Farm could be better utilized as a location for the start of a tiny house development instead of more park services. He said many of his ideas for legislative initiatives come from his interactions with the public and their suggestions.

Delegate Lewis-Young stated that she would like to come back to get any ideas/priorities the Commission may have before the next legislative session.

VI. Committee Reports

Aging in Place – Thea Ruff – Thea stated that this group's focus has been on multigenerational communities and their senior population. After some research, they developed seven self – evaluation questionnaires so that senior could evaluate themselves for aging in place. They started with a pilot project in Walkersville and met with the leadership there. There was an opportunity to meet with individuals before the recent presentation in that community. They shared information about the Commission, aging in place, the self-evaluation questionnaires and the Dept. on Aging MAP brochures. After some fine-tuning to the initiative process, they will be going into Brunswick as their next community. Their next meeting will be held at the Department of Aging on July 13th at 3:00pm.

Approval of Subcommittee Reports – Dianne made a motion that the Committee Reports be approved. All were in favor. No opposed.

VII. Public Comment – Judy Kendro spoke today and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to attend the meetings. She appreciates all the work that the Commission and the Department of Aging does to help the seniors in the community. She had information emailed to Commission members, via Sue Ramsburg, about legislation issues and was glad that Senator Ron Young was here today to present that information. She believes that with the proposed increase in the Frederick County senior population, the

problem with affordable housing will be worse than it is now. She was glad that Senator Young has this issue on his radar.

VIII. Announcements –

Thea spoke about the Local Health Initiative Plan (LHIP) action plan update which will be presented on June 20th from 5:00pm – 6:30pm at the C Burr Arts Library in the Community Room. The presentation will include updates on the three top health priorities which include adverse childhood experiences, behavioral health, and senior support.

Dianne spoke about the history of the Commission on Aging and reviewed the current opportunities for membership on the Commission. There are fifteen voting members that each serve a term of three years. If you are interested, please send a letter of interest and resume to Joyce Grossnickle, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD 21701. Opportunity information is located on the website at www.frederickcountymd.gov/commissiononaging.

Monica Grant stated there are a number of opportunities for the Commission on Aging and to work on initiatives for the Seniors First report. If you are interested in working on any of the Seniors First initiatives, please call Monica at 301-600-1065.

Carolyn True stated that there will be an Open Meetings Act training for Commission members on July 10th at 1:00pm in the second floor meeting room of Winchester Hall.

IX. Adjournment -

Dianne thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Ramsburg
Recording Secretary